



## ***ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 21, 2014**

# **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **ALDOT I-65 Hurricane Evacuation Exercise is Thursday, May 22**

**MONTGOMERY** – The Alabama Department of Transportation will conduct its annual rehearsal of the plan that helped safely evacuate the Gulf Coast during Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and Hurricane Dennis in 2005.

On Thursday, May 22, around 200 ALDOT workers and a contingency of state troopers and Alabama National Guard personnel will be positioned along I-65 between Baldwin County and Montgomery to simulate the activity associated with reversing I-65 traffic during an emergency.

Since 2000, ALDOT annually conducts rehearsals of its plan to reverse southbound traffic on Interstate 65 to allow four northward flowing lanes to evacuate the Gulf Coast. The term “contraflow” describes the condition when an interstate highway’s lanes carry traffic in the opposite direction for an evacuation (for instance, when I-65’s southbound lanes carry northbound traffic).

Alabama in 1999 developed a hurricane evacuation plan to reverse traffic on I-65’s southbound lanes after Hurricane Floyd hit the East Coast. Planning and annual rehearsals since spring 2000 made Alabama’s lane reversals during Hurricanes Ivan and Dennis a success, helping to evacuate the Gulf Coast without any hurricane-related loss of life.

The plan for reversing I-65 traffic requires 200 Department of Transportation employees, about 100 state troopers, and additional personnel from state and local emergency management and local law enforcement agencies.

The rehearsal simulates lane reversal activities that may occur during a real hurricane evacuation and provides an opportunity to practice the dozens of steps required, and to fine tune the process. Personnel will pre-position themselves and their equipment at 24 assigned checkpoints, including 21 interchanges, along I-65 between the initial crossover point south of State Road 225 in Mobile County and the north terminus points in Montgomery.

Traffic **will not** be reversed or detoured anywhere along I-65 during the reverse lane training exercise, but every portion of the plan will be simulated.

Media must contact ALDOT's Media and Communications Bureau to coordinate coverage of the exercise.

ALDOT's mission is to provide a safe, efficient, environmentally sound transportation network across Alabama. For further information, visit [www.dot.state.al.us](http://www.dot.state.al.us).

###

**ALDOT MEDIA CONTACT:**

**Tony Harris**

334-242-6552 Office

[harrist@dot.state.al.us](mailto:harrist@dot.state.al.us)

**TONY W. HARRIS**

Government Relations Manager

Bureau Chief, Media and Community Relations

**Alabama Department of Transportation**

Montgomery, AL

(334) 242-6552